



COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

DDP-YD/ETD (2020) 32

Strasbourg, 24 February 2020



CHANGE STARTS FROM THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

A Study on Results of Ten Years of Euro-Arab Youth Cooperation
2008-2018

DRAFT REPORT

Dr Mary Drosopoulos
consultant

The views expressed in this this report do not necessarily represent
the official opinion of the Council of Europe, the League of Arab States or other partners
involved in the cooperation.

CONTENTS

Preface

1. Introduction

1.1 A brief history of the Euro-Arab Youth Cooperation

1.2 The Stakeholders

1.2.1 The Council of Europe

1.2.2 The League of Arab States

2. Euro-Arab Youth Cooperation: a study

2.1 Aim and vision of the study

2.2 Scope and Methodology

3. Research findings

3.1 Usefulness of the Euro-Arab Youth Activities for its participants

3.2 Different needs for different types of youthwork

3.3 Gains and challenges

4. The voice of the participants: an overview of reports and declarations

4.1 Peace, Youth Migration and Intercultural Dialogue at the top of the agenda

4.2 Conclusions: Lessons learnt and the Road Ahead

4.3 Recommendations

4.4 Follow up projects and good practices

8. Sources

9. Annexes

9.1 Examples of shared Euro-Arab projects/good practices

9.2 Consent forms

Preface

The Euro-Arab Youth Cooperation has evolved amidst historical developments instigated by youth all around the world. From the *Arab Spring* to the *Indignados*, from the *Occupy* movement to the *Gezi Park* protests and from the *FridaysForFuture* to the *Sardines*, young people around the globe have taken the streets, changing the course of history. Movements like these have had an enormous impact on the perception of youth participation and on the role of youth work in times of crisis and revolution.

What was novel in these initiatives was the way young people found alternative means to organise themselves. Different types of activism and youthwork emerged out of these endeavours; digital activism took up a new form and became an essential tool for students' movement. In the Arab world, we saw the phenomenon of an 'underground' type of youthwork; Arab men and women, who had been living silently in frustration and hardship, found a niche to organise themselves in underground ways and start a revolution. In the countries of the South Eastern Europe and the Mediterranean that were most affected by the so-called 'refugee crisis', we witnessed an 'emergency' type of youthwork, where activists worked in extremely adverse conditions, rescuing people in life-or-death situations. In the recent years, we see school students taking to the streets, leading mass protests for the climate, using tools that can appeal to the youngsters of their generation, but also advocacy strategies that can make their message heard by those in power.

According to the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2250 on the Role of Youth for Peace and Security, 'today's generation of youth is the largest the world has ever known'. Africa is home to the world's largest youth population, followed by the Middle East (PRB 2019).¹ Yet, too many young people are living in situations of exclusion and poverty, facing on a daily basis a number of challenges. Their potential to play a significant role in global economic development and social prosperity is being ignored, downplayed, misused or wasted due to ongoing conflict, limited opportunities and resources, social or cultural constraints, economic precariousness and/or lack of freedom.

What is also frustrating is that many of these young people are 'betrayed activists'; people who were involved in large students' movement in both Europe and the Arab Region, who took to the streets and fought for their ideals, only to realise that, mindsets and institutions are sometimes too hard to shake; power can corrupt even those who initially fought against it; the transition to democracy can have unexpected obstacles or, to quote Montesquieu, that 'power without knowledge is power lost'. The sense of constant instability defining many young people's lives has tremendous social consequences, which are hard to measure at the moment, yet are bound to play a crucial role in future sociopolitical developments around the globe.

Young people taking to the streets today share the same passion as their predecessors; a passion driven at times by despair and at times by hope: young people are desperate for change and they know that this will not be provided unless they take action; at the

¹ <https://www.prb.org/worldpopdata/>

same time, the hope that positive change is still possible is what gives them the strength to continue.

This study is being conducted at an interesting point in time. We have reached 2020; this time had been characterised some years ago as the time that Youth would constitute the “new global power reshaping the world”.² Indeed, youth activism is on the rise again around the globe.³ Youth-led, or even child-led movements claim young people’s right to have a say in decisions affecting their future, taken by traditionally adult-driven institutions.

Comparing contemporary youth movements with those of the past, one could say that nowadays, youth leaders are more informed, more sophisticated and more aware of mistakes of the past, which they try not to repeat. Young activists today learn to speak the language that those in power speak, in order to get their message across. The new generation of youth leaders is well informed over what is happening around the world; they know on which doors to knock and how to avoid failed recipes; they can instinctively spot fake news and respond to misinformation. These skills are partly the result of growing in the era of social media and consequently, implementing the notion and function of ‘networks’ in real life.

Talking about networks, as we will see in the next pages, the opportunity to network is what the participants of the Euro-Arab youth fora⁴ have identified as the biggest gain at both an individual and organization level. The possibility to discover and discuss common challenges, share good practices, find partners and friends, get inspiration, know-how and encouragement has been greatly cherished and appreciated.

By reading older and younger participants’ responses with regard to the effect of the Euro Arab Youth activities on their lives and their organization, we can also understand how youth work and youth activism has evolved over the last decade both in Europe and the Arab region. Dialogue has been an important aspect of this procedure: dialogue among cultures, among young people, between young people and institutions or between different bodies representing youth.

Dialogue has been not only a starting point, but also a reliable medium in the learning process involved in every part of this ten-year cooperation. For both the participants and the partnering organisations and institutions, the Euro Arab activities have offered the ground to explore opinions, ideas and perspectives through a dialogical learning experience. This study aspires to contribute to this Dialogue, by starting a new discussion on what we have learnt so far, what we have achieved or failed to reach, what could have been done differently and what the next steps should be.

² United Nations

³ *Time*’s Person of the Year for 2019 is its youngest ever and is in fact, a teen activist. Obviously, for every youth leader illustrated on a magazine cover, hundreds more are working ardently to fight against human rights violations, social equalities, climate change, corruption and economic stagnancy.

⁴ and/or other Euro-Arab activities carried out jointly by the Council of Europe and the League of Arab States.

1. Introduction

1.1 A brief history of the Euro-Arab Youth Cooperation

The study that you are holding in your hands is celebrating the ten years of Cooperation between the Council of Europe and the League of Arab States in the field of youth; yet this cooperation dates much more than a decade.

The Council of Europe has supported dialogue between youth organisations and institutions concerned with youth policy since its inception, a support that in the recent past mainly focused on capacity-building for human rights education, intercultural dialogue and development of non-formal education. The co-operation with the League of Arab States has been an important part of this work, primarily articulated around the promotion of intercultural dialogue, youth participation and youth policy co-operation.

Studying official documents of the past, one can see the importance given in the benefits of exploring the common euro-arab cultural heritage and engaging into intercultural dialogue. In a draft recommendation presented by the Committee on Culture and Education in 1986, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, *noting the historical influence of Arab traditions in the formation of European culture; reaffirming its belief in the vocation of the Council of Europe to develop a cultural dialogue with other parts of the world*, recommends that the Committee of Ministers *investigate possibilities of extending cultural co-operation between Europe and the Arab world*.

Intercultural dialogue became a priority in the agenda of the Council of Europe especially from the 80's and on, when dramatic historic incidents led to the collapse of consolidated regimes, changes in geographical boundaries and large waves of migrants and refugees all around Europe. Although the Euro-Arab dialogue had always been a part of the agenda of the Council of Europe, the efforts to launch a systematic cooperation intensified in the beginning of the 21st century. The terrorist attacks in the United States in September 2001 led to a rise in islamophobia; the fear of radical Islam incited hatred and suspicion towards people of Arabic descent throughout Europe. By focusing on faith within the framework of human rights education, the Council of Europe placed intercultural and interreligious dialogue on the top of its agenda and engaged into systematic efforts for a solid and sustainable Euro-Arab Cooperation.

This co-operation took an important step forward with the participation of the Council of Europe in the Youth Forum of the League of Arab States in Jordan in 2008, and in Morocco in 2009. In April 2009, both institutions co-organised a training course for youth leaders at the European Youth Centre Budapest, which led to further co-operation in the framework of the Euro-Arab Youth Conference in Tunisia and Italy (Ragusa) in 2010. Since then, the two institutions have cooperated on a range of training courses and youth fora.

Another pivotal moment in time was the tragedy of the war in Syria, with all its repercussions at a social, geopolitical, moral and human level. The large flow of refugees from the affected areas, usually in completely disorganised and life-threatening manners, except for changing the morphological profile of the regions most

affected, brought a new dimension into the meaning of intercultural understanding. The large waves of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees who came to Europe carrying a heavy burden of trauma, tragedy and loss, found European governments and societies unprepared to tackle with this new reality. Overwhelmed by this situation, societies responded in different ways, exhibiting at times solidarity and at times suspicion and xenophobia. The rise of populism and right-wing extremism in many European societies was another reflection of the social turbulence in many host countries.

During these times, youthwork played a major role in managing the crisis and promoting understanding and cooperation. In societies where youthwork had been for years seen as something secondary or less important, it was suddenly made obvious that the contribution of youthworkers, as well as the tools, principles and methods employed by them, could make a positive change in the management of the situation. Partly as a response to this crisis, the topics given priority to within the Euro-Arab Youth Dialogue were human rights education, democratic youth participation, intercultural and interreligious dialogue, the combat of hate speech and also the prevention of violent radicalization and extremism.

The list of activities held within the Euro-Arab Cooperation framework since 2008 includes:

- 2008: Youth Forum of the League of Arab States, Amman.
- 2009: Youth Forum of the League of Arab States, in Morocco.
- 2009: Training course for youth leaders, at the European Youth Centre Budapest.
- 2010: Euro-Arab Youth Conference, in Tunisia and Italy (3rd Arab-European Youth Forum)
- 2010-2011: Long Term Training Course on Euro-Arab Youth Cooperation. The first seminar was held in Strasbourg, the closing seminar in Dubai.
- 2012: Training Course on Democratic Youth Participation, Hammamet, Tunisia.
- 2013: Training Course for Trainers on Democratic Youth Participation, Budapest, Hungary.
- 2013: 4th Arab-European Youth Forum on “Human Rights, Participation and Intercultural Dialogue”, Doha, Qatar.
- 2015: 5th Euro-Arab Youth Forum on Learning and Practicing Citizenship, European Youth Centre, Strasbourg, France.
- 2017: 6th Arab-European Youth Forum: “Overcoming Hate Speech and Extremism Together”, Fez, Morocco.
- 2018: “50-50” Euro-Arab training course: “Youth Participation and Gender Equality”, Doha, Qatar, and the Youth Forum for the Alliance of Civilisations (Doha).
- 2019: 7th Euro-Arab Youth Forum: “Dialogue on Youth, Peace and Security”, European Youth Centre, Budapest, Hungary.

During these ten years, the Euro Arab Cooperation faced major risks and challenges, yet contributed to the global management of major social crises, that led to pivotal changes in both European and Arab societies.

Before we continue to outlining key points in this Cooperation, it is important to understand who the stakeholders are and how they have supported global youth.

1.2 The Stakeholders

1.2.1 The Council of Europe

The Council of Europe was founded in 1949 in Strasbourg, France, with the aim of upholding human rights, democracy and the rule of law. In a Europe exhausted by decades of war, conflict and division, the newly established intergovernmental organisation embodied its members' hope and commitment to prevent similar atrocities from happening in the future. Today, the Council of Europe has 47 member states; in figures, this represents a population of approximately 820 million people.

The history of the Council of Europe is interconnected with major sociopolitical developments and activist movements. Although initially an institution consisting of the so-called western European countries of the time, the Council of Europe adopted a new agenda after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the decline of communism in Europe. In the aftermath of dramatic historic events, such as the collapse of the Soviet Union and the war in Yugoslavia, the organisation opened its doors to new members and consolidated its human-rights oriented mission. During the decade following 1989, the Council of Europe became the first pan-European intergovernmental institution promoting democracy and human rights (Denstad 2013:33). The Council of Europe was also among the first organizations to realise the morphological change in European societies due to war, migration and revolution and therefore, saw the need to invest on intercultural dialogue. In the years to come, various initiatives aimed at understanding diversity and promoting intercultural learning would be launched.

1.2.1.1 A youth-oriented agenda

With regard to youth, the Council of Europe has been among the first international organisations to invest on the empowerment of young people, by giving them voice to express themselves, providing training according to the principles of non-formal learning and human rights education and actively involving them in the decision-making processes. A pivotal point in this process was the creation of the European Youth Centre in Strasbourg in 1972. At a certain extent, the centre was symbolically created in the echo of the Mai 1968, in a country where its young people had taken to the streets to claim their right to a more equal and just society. The values of justice, youth participation, human rights and democracy remain until today among the pillars of the European Youth Centre.

In the same year, the Council of Europe established a financial mechanism to support non-governmental organizations in Europe working with youth. The European Youth Foundation was brought to existence in 1972 and continues until today providing funds to national and international youth organizations.

Almost two decades later, in 1995, the Council of Europe opened its second European Youth Centre, this time in Budapest, Hungary. It was during that year that an initiative of the Council of Europe was reaching dozens of young people all around the world, equipping them with tools and competences to tackle and prevent racism, xenophobia and intolerance. It was the 'All Different – All Equal' campaign, one of the most successful projects of the Council of Europe, with an impressive multiplier effect,

which prepared the ground for other long-term initiatives, such as the Enter! Project and the No Hate Speech Campaign.

The commitment of the Council of Europe to actively engage youth in issues affecting them is also being evident in its decision-making process: a unique and quite novel mechanism, known as the ‘co-management system’.⁵ The bodies primarily involved are the **European Steering Committee for Youth (CDEJ)** and the **Advisory Council on Youth**.

On the one hand, the CDEJ brings together representatives of the 50 states which have co-signed the European Cultural Convention with the aim of exchanging good practices in the field of youth policy and participation. On the other hand, the Advisory Council on Youth (a youth-led body consisting of 30 representatives from non-governmental youth organisations in Europe) provides input and ensures that the voice of young people is taken into consideration in all issues related with the youth sector of the Council of Europe.

When these two bodies meet together, they make up the **Joint Council** and a **Programming Committee**; they take decisions related with the priorities and budget of the Council of Europe youth sector, the European Youth Centres and the European Youth Foundation. The co-management system is a concrete implementation of young people’s right to be actively and meaningfully involved in the decision-making process over issues directly affecting them.

1.2.2 The League of Arab States

The League of Arab States (LAS, also known as the Arab League) was established in 1945. It is an association of 22 countries, whose populations are mainly Arabic speaking. With states joining progressively over time, the aim of the League has been to serve as a platform for the strengthening of social, economic, political and cultural bonds among its members and the promotion of their shared visions and interests. Following sociopolitical developments, the Arab League adjusted at times its priorities and agenda in order to manage conflict, support countries in transition, handle major economic and geopolitical challenges or even address natural calamities.

Taking into account the chronological period during which it was established, its overall philosophy and way of progressing, the Arab League shares several common elements with the Council of Europe. Among these is firstly, the core belief in the value of Dialogue and secondly, the investment on Young People, as key actors in the conduction of dialogue.

With regard to youth, the League of Arab States⁶ has engaged into systematic efforts to support youth participation and active engagement in civic life, to facilitate young people’s access to education and innovation, promote their welfare and contribute through larger schemes to the progress and development of the Arab region. The main body of the League promoting issues related with youth and youth policy is its Youth Department.

⁵ www.coe.int/t/dg4/youth/Coe_youth/co_management_en.asp

⁶ The Arab League website: www.lasportal.org

2. Euro-Arab Youth Cooperation: a study

2.1 Aim and vision of the study

After more than 10 years of cooperation, the League of Arab States and the Council of Europe decided to carry out a study in order to map the results and impact, as well as remaining gaps of the cooperation activities.

The study provides an overview of the main results and outcomes of key activities Euro-Arab youth cooperation as part of the work of the Council of Europe and the League of Arab States in the field of youth. It extracts key messages, issues and opportunities which have guided the Euro-Arab youth cooperation, looking more specifically at the Euro-Arab youth fora and highlighting outcomes and good practices which resulted from them.

In particular the study looks for answers to the following questions:

1. What are the major outcomes from the Euro-Arab youth fora for: participants, youth organisations, civil society, and for the institutional partners (Council of Europe, League of Arab States and their respective stakeholders)?
2. What is the impact of the Euro-Arab activities carried out jointly by the Council of Europe and the League of Arab States? What is specific about them? What is their added value?
3. Were there specific follow-up initiatives and cooperation undertaken by the participants of the fora? In what way did the fora impact on the work of the participants' organisations? Examples of some projects or initiatives could be analysed.
4. How effective is the cooperation? Which challenges and opportunities impact the cooperation? What could make the cooperation more effective and sustainable? What are the lessons learnt?

This study has been written with the aspiration of capturing the key moments in this ten-year cooperation and of communicating faithfully its main messages, as voiced by participants, stakeholders and other actors directly or indirectly involved in the process.

One has to realise, however, the limitations of this endeavour. It is impossible for a single text to provide a comprehensive overview of this fascinating journey. The primary research on documents, such as reports, articles, academic papers, survey results or participants' declarations can provide information on different priorities, stances and decisions that defined the progress of the Cooperation at certain moments in time. Written texts are the rigid proof of words said and actions done. The 'spirit' however, of this Cooperation lies in its very people. Secondary research, conducted via personal interviews, focus groups and direct observation aspired to capture the *opinions* and *feelings* of people involved. Both opinions and feelings, however, are extremely volatile; they tend to change with the passing of time, as we grow older and wiser, as we detach ourselves from situations and see things from a wider perspective.

The study can give its readers only a small taste of the atmosphere before, during and after the Youth Fora, as well as a brief glimpse into the sociocultural reality of the people involved, at least of those who were willing to share their narrative. Despite its limitations, the study aspires to support the evaluation of the cooperation and help shape the modalities of future activities.

2.2 Scope and methodology

The present study presents the findings of a research conducted both at a primary and secondary level.

The primary (field) research is the product of

- personal, semi-structured, in-depth interviews with participants, trainers and experts/representatives of institutions,
- online survey in the form of a questionnaire with multiple choice and open-ended questions,
- personal notes during the Fora and other relevant meetings,
- notes taken during observation sessions in the field and/or focus groups.

The secondary (desk) research has been based on a critical overview of

- 1) previous fora reports,
- 2) relevant articles, papers, blogs and other bibliographic sources available in various languages,
- 3) links to existing good practices/tools/resources etc that have stemmed from the Euro-Arab Youth Dialogue,
- 4) manuals, policy papers, t-kits etc, relative to the topic,
- 5) official documents available online,
- 5) the written Declarations of each Forum.

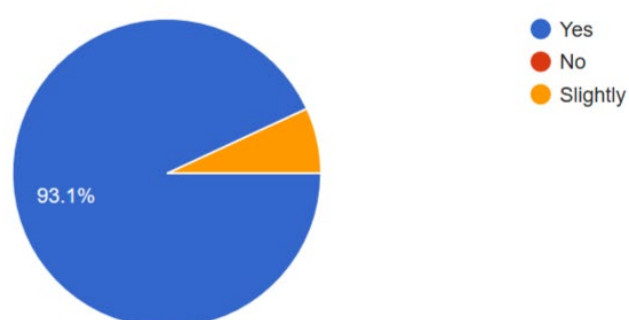
From a methodological point of view, field research has been based upon methodological tools involving personal interaction with participants, such as observation and in-depth conversations. Interviews were conducted in relatively relaxed environments, enabling both parts to engage in quite detailed conversations and also providing the space to ask each other questions and clarify ambiguous points. As already mentioned, research has its limitations and people sometimes tend to provide 'politically correct' or 'socially acceptable' answers, especially when asked about issues connected with social/religious values or taboos; a phenomenon described by Timur Kuran (1995) as 'preference falsification'. All interviews with participants were anonymous and adhered to a deontological code of ethics. For this reason, names appearing under the quotes have been changed. The research also tried to maintain gender equality, as well as age variety; the people who were interviewed had been involved in older or more recent activities; came from different parts of the world and had completely distinct backgrounds. Their insight has contributed to the both the richness and validity of this study.

3. Research findings

3.1 Usefulness of the Euro-Arab Youth Activities for its participants

The Euro-Arab Youth Activities are constructed upon the principles of non-formal learning, intercultural dialogue and human rights education. They serve as platforms for dialogue, where young people from all over the world, active in the field of youth through different capacities, can come together to discuss issues affecting them, exchange good practices and success stories, plan activities and follow-up actions. The activities are based on the idea of learning from each other and moving on forward *together*. The main event of this Cooperation is the Euro-Arab Youth Forum, a biannual event, which is organized one year in a member-state of the Council of Europe and one year in a country of the League of Arab States. In-between these fora, other youth-related activities are organized, such as seminars, meetings, training courses etc.

The research findings show that for the vast majority of the respondents (93.1%) their participation at the Euro Arab Cooperation activities has been a very useful and rewarding experience. It has to be emphasised that neither in the survey nor in the personal interviews has there been an individual who claimed that their participation was a negative one. (The remaining 6,9% answered ‘maybe’). Having this positive feedback as a starting point, let us see which are the aspects of the Activities that the participants have appreciated the most.



With regard to what they have gained on an individual basis from their participation in the Euro-Arab youth fora (or other Euro-Arab activities carried out jointly by the Council of Europe and the League of Arab States), most respondents (86,2%) mentioned that the Euro-Arab activities offered a priceless opportunity to network and develop new friendships. These friendships, as they stressed in their interviews, developed mainly during their leisure time or field trips that they took together.

More than half of the respondents said that their participation lifted many of the stereotypes that they had been preserving for each other. In some cases, friendships developed between people who would have never met under other circumstances and who -most importantly- before coming to the Forum, never considered even sitting at the same table.

I applied because I liked the topic of the activity. When I got selected, my feelings were mixed. I had never met Arabs before and I was a bit skeptical. Not because of racism or anything, it is just that I did not see the point of spending so many hours discussing with people of their mentality. I felt that the group would not be able to learn anything from their contexts due to authoritarianism of their countries and their media. Within the first hour, however, I totally changed my mind! I can say that my whole mindset was changed due to this experience...

Elina, 25, student, from South Eastern Europe

I was lucky to be selected to be part of this international activity. The training concept was good enough, but the impact of the training was located for me on a personal level. For the first time, I met someone from the Middle East and west-north Africa, and I developed empathy for their experiences, feelings, etc. It changed my mind for the capacities of youth from that part of the world, I was surprised in a positive way. We should have more opportunities to meet and collaborate with youngsters/professionals from that part of the world.

Val, 29, psychologist from N. Macedonia

It is a fact that in many countries of both Europe and the Arab world, neither the formal schooling system,⁷ nor the media offer space for the development of critical thinking and intercultural dialogue. News coming from both sides via the media are usually negative and fragmented, projecting a distorted view of one's reality on the other, based partly on nationalistic discourses. Young people from both regions grow up having a number of stereotypes and misconceptions about each other. Activities like the ones implemented within the Euro-Arab Youth Dialogue are an indispensable opportunity to meet each other, visit each other's setting and create a personal opinion, based on real facts. Respondents agree that having a personal experience of the other culture is the only way for European and Arab youth to understand each other and challenge existing stereotypes. By understanding respective ideology, as well as potential cultural constraints and values, European and Arab youth can find ways to build bridges of cooperation, based on mutual respect.

A significant part of the interviewees pointed out the need to train ourselves on a different kind of rhetoric; an alternative way of approaching diversity and managing conflict. 'We have to learn to speak a language driven by peace and aiming at peace', as one of the trainers said.

Another interviewee, stressed the need to learn how to debate without causing conflict:

We can disagree about an idea and still be friends. We have to learn to disagree. It's normal. And it's healthy.

Mohammed, 26, refugee student from Syria, now living in Europe

⁷ The European Commission's Education and Training Monitor published in November 2016 called for Member States "to make their education systems more relevant and inclusive, in particular regarding the integration of newly arrived refugees and migrants" (EU Monitor 2016).

3.2 Different needs for different types of youthwork

The second biggest gain that participants saw at an individual level was the fact that they came up with ideas for new projects promoting human rights, youth participation and/or intercultural dialogue. The 72,4% mentioned that the Fora and/or other related activities served as a point of inspiration and a safe space to exchange innovative tools and good practices. When it comes, however, to transforming ideas into action, almost half of the respondents saw a gap between what they experienced at the Fora and the actual situation back in their settings. The 52,8% felt that they acquired new skills and competences to promote dialogue and human rights values in their community; the rest, however, said that they would find it hard to implement these tools, resources and techniques back home, for a variety of parameters:

A significant number of people interviewed mentioned that the Euro-Arab youth activities mainly have a Eurocentric approach, which is implementable not even in the whole of Europe, but mainly in the parts where youthwork is recognised and institutionalised.

In countries like Germany, France or Sweden, for instance, to be a youthworker is a recognised profession. In my country, there is not even a name for it. In central Europe most municipalities have a youth centre and the authorities support their projects. This is a fantasy for us. We do projects out in the streets, usually with zero budget and whatever means we have. We have no social insurance, no recognition, not even acknowledgement of our activity. We do what we do because we want to make a change. If we don't act, then nobody else will act for us. When I participate in the Council of Europe activities, I feel both sad and happy. Happy because I get inspired, I see that another reality exists. Then, I compare it to my society and I think to myself: for us, this is a Dreamland.

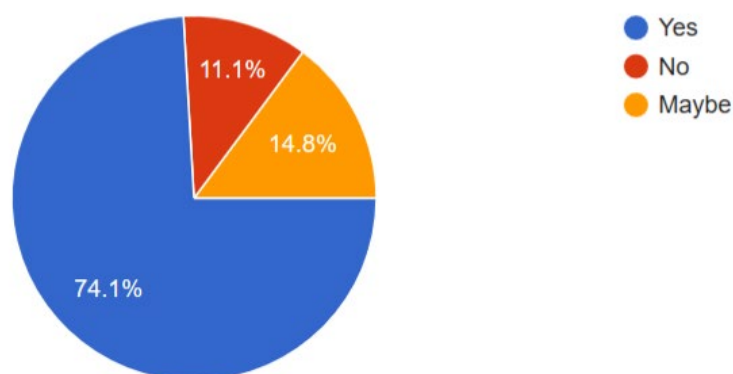
Maria, 27, human rights activist from Greece

We must understand that the youthwork conducted in central Europe is not the same as the one done in the Arab world. The philosophy, the setting, the circumstances are completely different... Back home, you often have to organise yourself in parallel with the formal system, often secretly. Division and trauma are part of our daily reality. When I talk to my European friends, I feel that they are ignorant of the situation. They try to sympathise, but they do not really understand. This is why need opportunities to talk to each other. But we must also realise what each of us needs in order to be more effective and try to work on that. The skills and competences needed to be a youthworker in Syria, for instance, are completely different that the ones needed by someone working with refugees in Germany.

Abdel, 22, student of Arab descent, now living in Europe

The gap between skills acquired at the Euro-Arab activities and their actual applicability in the participants' settings is also depicted in the very small percentage of those who answered positively on whether their organisation gained new techniques that they could implement in their communities. Although a big majority (74.1 %) said that their participation had an impact on the work of their organization, they located the biggest gains in the establishment of new partnerships (36%) and the widening of the organisation's activities to new countries/domains (36%). Figures show that the Euro-Arab activities have been less effective with regard to empowering people and organisations to have more efficient cooperation with public authorities related to youth policy and other aspects of the youth sector.

Did the Euro-Arab youth fora have an impact on the work of your organization?



One out of ten respondents said that the gains were only at an individual level, for various reasons: their organisation did not support them after the activity, either for lack of interest/different needs or priorities/external factors etc; some of them did not have an active role in the organisation's decision-making process and others simply did not have the time/space/availability or a concrete idea on how to implement or disseminate the tools and knowledge acquired.

At this point, it is interesting to open a parenthesis and compare these findings with the results of a mid-term evaluation conducted for the Council of Europe in 2012.⁸ With regard to what they have gained from the activities, respondents had located back then the biggest gain at an individual level. The following extract is being quoted, translated from French:

Personal development is the component that has been most influenced by the participation in the training activities (77%); this in the sense of the inspiration and motivation that young people have gained from their participation in the program, but

⁸ Rekhis, M. (2012)

also, from the fact that developed self-confidence, improved their communication and active listening skills. (2012: 18)

The findings of the 2012 report coincide, also, with the current findings on the practicability and applicability of the competences that participants are trained on:

The participants also said that, in order to deepen their learning, they would have appreciated a more participatory and more transparent program: with clear objectives in the beginning and provision of integral information in all stages of the process. (ibid)

Coming back to the fora's impact on individuals and organisations, indeed, the skills, attitudes and knowledge required by people and/or organizations working with youth at a grass-roots level, sometimes in a battlefield, confronted at a daily basis with conflict and drama, are distinct that the ones expected by youthworkers functioning in a safe environment, far away from the action, sometimes in front of a computer or in a fully-equipped plenary room. These two images, however, can be seen as the two sides of the same coin; as two different realities of youthwork, where the one can enrich the experience and efficiency of the other. This 'gap' or 'different reality' with regard to the way youthwork is viewed and conducted in European and Arab settings, respectively, should not be an obstacle, but quite the opposite: it should be a starting point for a new dialogue on what we can learn from each other and what we can practically implement in our local realities.

The Euro-Arab Youth Fora are a unique opportunity to learn from each other. A problem in Europe is how to mobilize young people and also to find NGOs doing real work. In the Arab world it is quite the opposite: young people are eager to organize themselves, but sometimes don't know how. Europeans can learn about how to engage youth, whereas Arabs can expand their techniques and methods in youthwork.

Mayssa, trainer and rapporteur in the Fora

As many of the interviewees shared, sharing good practices with youthworkers based in Europe can give access to new resources, fundraising opportunities and techniques in sustainable organisational management. On the other hand, in certain parts of Europe, where young people seem to be disengaged and detached from political and civic reality, the contact with the Arab Youth can be a source of inspiration on finding ways to motivating and engaging young people into civic life.

As research suggests⁹ and history proves, young Europeans and Arabs respond differently to crises and adversities: what discourages the first, triggers the latter. When losing their faith in political institutions, young Europeans tend to disengage from the civic reality and abstain from procedures that could in fact, give them a voice. The high percentages of European youth abstaining from voting (even in situations which are considered critical for their country) is a reflection of the disappointment that young Europeans experience. They often reserve the same attitude towards the NGO sector, which they often consider affiliated with the government and the established system,

⁹ Raihani 2013, Titley & Georgescu 2013, Maldžiski 2013 etc.

therefore corrupted and unreliable. The activities conducted in youth clubs are usually detached from the notion of active citizenship or political participation and many young people are not even unaware of movements (Tittle & Georgescu 2013:15-16).

On the contrary, Arab youth respond with action. Khalil Raihani (2013:5) points out that ‘a lack of confidence in institutions does not lead systematically to youth disaffection, and the desire to participate may be expressed in different ways. Participation in the non-profit sector is significant, as is political involvement. What we are seeing here are not traditional forms of participation, but “unconventional” ones such as strikes, demonstrations, etc. Young people are showing a keen interest in civic participation, but in new ways’.

3.3 Gains and challenges

For the majority of the respondents, the biggest accomplishment of the Cooperation has been firstly, the promotion of intercultural/ dialogue and understanding (40%) and secondly, the encouragement of more and better exchanges between young people in both regions (33%). The promotion of human rights and equality is the third more popular answer (15%). Participants feel, however, that the activities organised within the Cooperation have not supported their participation in policies, processes or mechanisms related with youth policy. Furthermore, figures show that the thematic activities have not managed to equip participants with practical tools, knowledge and competences that would allow them under real circumstances to address hate, human rights violations, violent radicalisation or extremism.

Among other challenges affectively negatively the Cooperation, the research shows that the biggest threat for the longevity and efficiency of the program is the limited follow-up activity. Except for the casual, life-and-work-related reasons distracting people after the end of a project, another negative factor is people’s distrust of both their governments and involved institutions; respondents doubt that stakeholders will actually commit to the promises made during the Fora and other related activities and that they will support their follow-up activities.

Although the Cooperation relies -at least theoretically- on fruitful dialogue, conducted on equal terms, a large number of respondents feel that their voice is not being heard.

Long talks by stakeholders and politicians in large conference rooms... Then input from experts in plenary rooms.... We are invited to come and listen... Listen to people talking a wooden language, repeating clichés... When we are finally given the time and space to talk, then this is not enough for everyone to express their opinion or conditions are not mature enough for people to open up, because there hasn't been the necessary preparation.

Vera, 21, youthworker based in Central Europe

The time we have together is limited and we should make the best of it. When will we have the opportunity again to be together and explore each other's culture? Instead of using this time to listen to talks made by politicians, we

should invest on getting to know each other. For me the biggest learning moments were outside the plenary, spent with my new friends.

Ali, 26, student from Egypt

Making smart use of the time available to understand each other is the only way to overcome stereotypes that can get in the way of developing a more meaningful cooperation. These stereotypes, as one respondent noticed, can be unrevealed, deeply rooted inside us, yet waiting for a trigger to come up in the surface and sabotage any attempt to experience a different cultural perspective.

4. The voice of the participants: an overview of reports and declarations

4.1 Peace, Youth Migration and Intercultural Dialogue on top of the agenda

Ten years after the Ragusa Declaration (July 2010), young people involved in the Euro-Arab Youth Dialogue are still concerned primarily by the same issues: limited youth participation, conflict, migration, lack of mobility, inequality... These issues, however, have taken new forms, as challenges manifest themselves through different ways and media. Young people's call for conflict resolution, intercultural dialogue, youth engagement and social justice echoes loudly.

Since the beginning of the Euro-Arab Youth Cooperation, young people long for Peace, as emphasized in the reports of the very first activities (2008-2010). The latest Euro-Arab Youth Forum (2019) was also dedicated to Youth, Peace and Security, showing the necessity to reconsider peace under current circumstances.

Peace is threatened primarily by ongoing conflict; a large part of the People involved in the Euro-Arab Cooperation are experiencing directly or indirectly the tragic consequences of war. Peace is also at threat in situations of social exclusion, economic recession, dictatorship or lack of freedom of expression; phenomena which consequently lead to hatred, polarisation and insecurity in our societies.

In all the reports and declarations drafted after the Fora, migration is identified as one of the biggest plagues affecting Youth. In the documents produced after the early activities (2008-2010), this threat takes particularly the form of forced migration, affecting mainly internally displaced persons resulting from war and conflicts as well as environmental and climate change. In the reports of the following years (2010-2011, 2013), unemployment, economic instability, dictatorship, lack of opportunities, polarisation and war are among the factors forcing young people to flee from the countries. Migration, forced or not, is identified as a phenomenon affecting mainly young Arabs who migrate to Europe in search of better opportunities,¹⁰ but also, as we will see in later analyses (2013, 2018), European youth, especially from the Western Balkans and South Eastern Europe countries affected by the economic crisis, who

¹⁰ UNDP (2016) Arab Human Development Report <http://www.arab-hdr.org/reports/2016/english/AHDR2016En.pdf>

Also on the news: <https://www.arabnews.com/node/1515101/middle-east>

choose to migrate to more prosperous European countries. The 2019 declaration introduces the problem of ‘brain-drain’ among youth as a phenomenon which needs to be addressed systematically and calls upon institutions and governments to invest upon their youth by providing infrastructure, policies and conditions that will allow young people to have a decent future in their countries.

Looking back at the Declarations of the previous fora, we realise the change in our societies and the new challenges emerging. People nowadays are bombarded with misinformation and fake news, distorting their view of reality; keeping a critical mind and judging situations wisely is harder than ever. The quest for peace in our times calls for new skills, as young people need to be prepared to recognise and face new threats and answer to unprecedented situations.

At the 2019 Human Development Report (HDR),¹¹ entitled “Beyond income, beyond averages, beyond today: inequalities in human development in the 21st Century”, we can read the following extract:

A new generation of inequalities is opening up, around education, and around technology and climate change - two seismic shifts that, unchecked, could trigger a ‘new great divergence’ in society of the kind not seen since the Industrial Revolution.

In this context, the need for young people’s access to training and education identified in the very first Fora is not the same as the one expressed now; it does show, however, people’s willingness to learn new tools in order to handle new social phenomena.

As we go through reports and other texts written during this decade, we can observe the following tendencies, which underline the progress been made as the cooperation and the people involved in it have evolved. Fundamental notions, such as ‘gender’, ‘culture’, or ‘race’ seem to have been revisited and revised over the years. The Euro-Arab Youth Cooperation has been responding to the changing times, the new trends and needs emerging; something which has been reflected on the agenda of activities and the richness of the topics. Issues which were once seen as a taboo started being discussed in an open and frank manner.¹² Provocative or ambiguous topics monopolising the media entered the plenary rooms and the round discussions, as illustrated in the reports of the activities.

The Fez Declaration (2016) underlines the necessity for young people to unite against the threat of terrorism and violent radicalisation; to grow aware of the techniques and vehicles through which young people are being radicalised; to understand the deeper reasons leading young people to extreme behaviours and to find alternative ways to prevent this from happening.

The report of the training courses in Doha (2018) examines gender and calls for institutions, organisations, young people and local leaders to ensure gender equality and democratic youth participation in all aspects of society.

¹¹ Available in both English and Arabic in <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/human-development-report-2019-beyond-income-beyond-averages-beyond-today-inequalities>

¹² See also: Atlantic Council (2014) *Breaking Taboos: Youth Activism in the Gulf States*.

The Declaration produced within the latest Forum in Budapest (2019) calls upon institutions, partners and participants to contribute to the implementation of the UN 2250 resolution, each one with their own means available.

Young people's vision for inclusive, resilient, just societies, constructed upon the principles of democracy, human rights and equality is reflected in all documents produced within the ten years of activity. Special emphasis is being given to protect and promote the rights of minority or vulnerable groups; refugees, children, people living in conflict, people from disadvantaged settings, etc. What is particularly optimistic when making this journey in time, is that, important progress has been made in certain issues which had been identified as serious threats in the documents of the first activities, issues notably related with the role and position of women or the right to define one's gender.¹³

These are accomplishments that need to be celebrated.

Summarising, we can say that through its ten years of existence, the Euro-Arab cooperation has managed to strengthen youth by empowering and training young people on the pillars of democracy, human rights education and intercultural dialogue, contributing thus, to peace and stability. Considering, on the one hand, the shifting needs of youth in a constantly changing world and on the other hand, the sheer size of the two regions (Europe with all the Council of Europe member states and the Arab region, including the Gulf states and the members of the Arab League far from the shores of the Mediterranean), this partnership needs to be strengthened and continued.

4.2 Conclusions: Lessons learnt and the Road Ahead

There is a phrase among the conclusions of the 7th Euro-Arab Youth Forum which summarises the core message that could define the way this Cooperation should continue:

Change starts from the neighbourhood

This phrase, simple and concise, reminds us of the responsibility that we all have to implement the values, ideas and good practices stemming from the Euro-Arab Youth Cooperation. Change starts from ourselves and expands to our local organisation, our community, our country and our region. For any institutional recommendation to be sustainable and implementable there must be individual will. Social changes start with a change in mindset, as the respondents of the research have pointed out.

The Euro-Arab Youth Cooperation offers a unique platform to promote youth and human rights via dialogue. The cooperation of young people with institutions as implemented in the safe and closed environments of the Fora should be transferred to real life, as well. In this sense, stakeholders should be faithful to the promises made in the framework of the Youth Cooperation. Young participants, too, should commit to the pursue of the reality that they envision, as expressed in their own declarations.

¹³ This finding also coincides with the results of the United Nations report, as published in the press release SG/SM/19536-ECO/303, dated on the 6th of April 2019, available in <https://www.un.org/press/en/2019/sgsm19536.doc.htm>

It is beyond doubt that the implementation of the recommendations drafted in the framework of the Cooperation will have to overcome practical and technical details. Bureaucracy, lack of infrastructure, disengagement, unexpected challenges are only some of the obstacles. When reaching the point of implementing follow-up activities, a change in mentality will be needed not only from the Representatives of the governments, but from the Youth, as well. Governments should see youth as an asset, as a vibrant force for growth, therefore, they should believe and invest in the potential of youth.

Likewise, Youth, should be daring and wise at the same time; they should claim their rights in effective ways and approach the respective authorities with concrete plans and ideas. It is true that, up to a certain extent, the reason why young people are excluded from the decision-making process is rooted in the mentality of those in power. Factors of hierarchy, tendencies to look at youth as a ‘special interests group’ or simply, rigid ways of ‘doing ways’ often get in the way of youth participation. It may also be the case, however, that established decision makers *do not know* how to involve young people.

An interview with a Moroccan consultant for the League of Arab States, verifies this thought:

*I urge young people: speak up! Talk about the problems that really affect you!
But don't discuss only the problem, think also about solutions.
And show us the way.*

With regard to the thematic foci of the next Fora, participants of the research propose a number of topics: conflict resolution, women's empowerment, digital activism, refugee rights, implementation of the UN 2250 resolution, active citizenship, youth participation, structural dialogue. What respondents stress is the necessity to have more practical input and access to tools and resources that they can take back home and implement in their local settings. Human rights, peace and intercultural dialogue are also among the most popular topics propose; respondents express the willingness to further explore these fundamental notions; to deepen their knowledge and understanding and find ways to apply the knowledge gained in order to have tangible effects.

4.3 Recommendations

These are young people's recommendations to the institutional partners of the Euro-Arab Youth Cooperation, notably the **Council of Europe and the League of Arab States**, as identified by the research and the online survey:

-
1. Ensure the strengthening and continuation of the Cooperation; both of the Youth fora and the in-between parallel activities.
 2. Keep updating the agenda of the Cooperation so as to respond to current needs, trends and insufficiencies.
 3. Ensure there are ways (administrative, financial and educational) for young people and their organisations to develop projects in the Euro-Arab area. The space for such follow-up projects is very limited at the moment despite the need and interest to cooperate together.
 4. Ensure there is access to research-funding and adequate support systems for research focused on issues relevant to the topics discussed in the framework of the Euro-Arab youth cooperation. The research should provide updated information that can be used for development of the Euro-Arab youth cooperation activities.
 5. Enhance cooperation by promoting Human Rights and Intercultural Education as part of the formal education system and the school curricula, including content such as understanding politics and political structures, media literacy and critical thinking. In the Euro-Arab area there are many good practices which should be used as a base for further cooperation to make them available in both regions.
 6. Open up the Fora to people of more diverse backgrounds, yet relevant with Youth (activists, teachers, youth leaders etc). Involve people who can contribute productively to the discussion and who are interested in investing in this cooperation.
 7. Make application to the activities available to Arab youth via transparent, democratic and inclusive procedures.
 8. Create a single, official online platform / inventory where one can find individuals and organisations that have been involved, good practices and projects implemented, possible partners for future projects.
 9. Provide a special budget to fund projects implemented within the Euro-Arab Youth Cooperation.
-

4.4 Follow up projects and good practices

The sustainability, long-term success and efficiency of the Cooperation lies largely on the follow-up actions that will take place at a grass-roots level. These are the initiatives that can give the Cooperation a multiplier effect and ensure that more people will benefit indirectly.

The Cooperation has inspired dozens of projects in all the region that the Cooperation addresses. It has to be stressed that the realisation of these initiatives has not always been an easy task for participants; endeavours of this kind can always be discouraged, delayed or even postponed due to a number of factors such as lack of funding, lack of support from the respective organisation or the local authorities, unexpected socio-political shifts, bureaucracy, as well as personal reasons. Despite adversities or unforeseen obstacles, with minimal funds and resources, participants have managed to design and implement a variety of projects in their local settings.

Content-based, the majority of the follow-up projects have been either training courses or youth exchanges. There have also been initiatives such as festivals, youth camps, round-tables and one-day conferences. Most of them take place at the homeland of the person who is coordinating the event. Geographically speaking, the countries which have hosted the most projects are Morocco and Tunisia. This comes as no surprise, given that these two countries are considered a bright example in the region with regard to youthwork. Concerning methodology, the vast majority of the projects have employed non-formal education tools and techniques, based on the principle of learning-by-doing and experiential learning. Elements of intercultural, peace and human rights education are also in the core of these initiatives.

The highest percentage of the projects is on a local base, using the local language. This means that the community can benefit directly from these initiatives and consequently, get access to the tools, resources and values of the Cooperation. Partners are usually local NGOs, educational institutions and other stakeholders; funding comes either from the government or from funds available for youth provided by other organisations. The trainers and facilitators of these project usually also come from the same area.

Language is perhaps the main reason why there has been a very limited number of joint euro-arab projects conducted. Other factors can be the geographical distance and of course, the mobility limitations applying to a large number of participants. The difficulty of getting a visa to travel to another place to conduct a project is beyond doubt a factor holding young people back.

In the annex attached, you can find examples of 3 indicative projects, representing 3 different genres: a training of youthworkers, a youth-exchange and a festival. The specific projects are indeed multi-ethnic and multicultural, as they have involved partners from different regions and from completely different cultural/ethnic linguistic backgrounds.

Sources

Albinyana, R. & Fernandez, M. (2018). 'From the Euro-Arab Dialogue to a EuroArab Summit: Revamping the EU-Arab Partnership'. *Geographical Overview | The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and Other Actors*.

Bayat, A. (2000). *Social Movements, Activism and Social Development in the Middle East*. Geneva: United Nations Research Institute for Social Development

Denstad, F.Y. (2009/2013). *Youth Policy Manual For Arab Countries: How to develop a national youth strategy*. European Union-Council of Europe youth partnership.

Drosopulos, M. (2018). 'The circle of trust: Integrating refugees; redefining youth work and intercultural learning'. *Europe in transition: Diversity, Identity and Youth Work*. British Council.

Hind, D. (2012). *The new common sense*. London: New Left Project.

Khatib, L. & Lust, E. (2014). 'The Transformation of Arab Activism New Contexts, Domestic Institutions, and Regional Rivalries'. *POMED*. Available in <https://pomed.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/Policy-Brief-Khatib-Lust-May-2014.pdf>

Khoury, R., Kaag, S., & Lopez, V. (2011). *Generation on the move: Insights into the conditions, aspirations and activism of Arab youth*. Lebanon: Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy & International Affairs.

Khojji, Z. (2019). 'More than half of young Arabs want to emigrate'. *Arab news*. Available in <https://www.arabnews.com/node/1515101/middle-east>

Maldžiski, A. (2013). Youthwork in countries of crisis. *Coyote*.

Mason, P. (2012). *Why It's Kicking Off Everywhere*. London: Verso.

McNulty, J. (2019). 'Youth activism is on the rise around the globe, and adults should pay attention'. *UC Santa Cruz Magazine*. Available in <https://news.ucsc.edu/2019/09/taft-youth.html>

Raihani, K. (2013). 'Mobilisation of Arab Youth: an experience and a form of political participation'. *Coyote*.

Rekhis, M. (2014). *Rapport du projet "Participation démocratique des jeunes" Décembre 2012- Novembre 2014*. France : Conseil de l'Europe.

Safi, M. (2019). Frustration and anger fuel wave of youth unrest in Arab world. 2 Nov. 2019. Available in <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/nov/02/middle-east-young-frustration-joblessness-fuels-protests>

Titley, G. (2013). *Occupy European Youthwork?* Coyote.

United Nations (2019). 'Entire Arab World Must Strive to Empower its Youth, Secretary-General Tells Global Economic Forum on Middle East, North Africa'. Press Release, available in <https://www.un.org/press/en/2019/sgsm19536.doc.htm>

World Economic Forum (2016). 'The Arab world must invest in its greatest asset - young people'. Available in <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2016/12/the-arab-world-s-challenge-empowering-young-people-today-for-a-better-tomorrow/>

Yahya, M. (2019). 'The Middle East's Lost Decades: Development, Dissent, and the Future of the Arab World'. *Foreign Affairs*.

Zık, R. & Barbeito, C. (2013). 'Still waiting for peace...' *Coyote*.

Further reading

Robbins, M. (2017). 'Youth, Religion and Democracy After the Arab Uprisings: Evidence from the Arab Barometer'. *Special Issue: The State of Middle Eastern Youth*. Volume 107, Issue 1

Lehmann, J.P. (2011). 'Europe and the Arab World in the 21st Century. Does more unite the Arab world and Europe than divides them?' *The Globalist*. Available in <https://www.theglobalist.com/europe-and-the-arab-world-in-the-21st-century/>

Links / Documents

"Youth – Investing and Empowering", the new EU strategy for youth 2010-2018: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX:52009DC0200?>


"Studies on Youth Policies in the Mediterranean Partner Countries: Tunisia", prepared by Sylvie Floris. Available at: www.salto-youth.net/rc/euromed/EMlibrary/emeducpub/EMyouthpolicies/

"Studies on Youth Policies in the Mediterranean Partner Countries: Lebanon", prepared by Kamal Rarrbo. Available at: www.salto-youth.net/rc/euromed/EMlibrary/emeducpub/EMyouthpolicies/

ANNEXES

Examples of good practices/ projects implemented within the Euro-Arab Youth Cooperation.

Project 1

Project title	CPC (Clearly Positive Culture) – YouthActs
Participants	Farouk ZAABAB & Kamila LENCZEWSKA : project coordinators
Organisation	Youthmed Algérie and 11 partner organisations
Country	Algeria / Spain
Description	The project is a training of youthworkers on intercultural dialogue and youth participation through creative methods. T
Target-group	Young people between 20 and 35 years old. High-school students between 15 and 20 years old.
Methodology	Non-formal learning tools Intercultural education  Lorca – September 2014
Results and impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The project involved 24 young people, active in civil society, from 12 different countries, Arabic and European. - 40 young students also benefited. - Participants acquired practical tools that they could use in the contexts.

Project 2

Project title	Loesje crosses the Mediterranean
Participants	Marina WEHBE TRAJKOVSKA (project coordinator)
Organisation	Local Loesje groups and the organisations Development No Borders (Egypt), One Voice (Israel), Juzoor Youth Parliament (Palestine), KID Pina (Slovenia), Xchange Scotland (UK) and Loesje e.V. (Germany).
Country	Germany
Description	The aim of the project is the mobilization and empowerment of young people by improving conditions for freedom of expression; providing tools, trainings and networking that encourage Dialogue, Diversity, Democracy and Development. The aim will be achieved by spreading the Loesje creative writing methodology, which supports active citizenship, freedom of expression in a tolerant and open-minded way.
Target-group	36 participants from the participating NGOs
Methodology	The participating organizations were given an introduction to the Loesje methods of poster making, while others shared their experiences with using Loesje methods in their work.
Results and impact	After returning to our countries we keep working on preparing the next stages of the projects.

Project 3

Project title	Intercultural Dialogue Week
Participants	Mary DROSOPOULOS, Arianit JASHARI
Organisation	Access NGO, UNICEF Lab
Country	Kosovo*
<p>Description</p> 	<p>The "Intercultural Dialogue Week" took place in the historic city of Vushtrria/Vucitrn, at the region of Mitrovica between 4-8 June 2018, with the aim of exploring the values of cultural diversity, promoting cultural awareness and creating bridges among young people of different ethnic and cultural background inside and outside Kosovo.</p> <p>During the 5 days of the project young people from the region and beyond had the opportunity to participate in artistic and educational activities, to network and learn more about the history of the city .</p>
Target-group	<p>The target group of the activity was young people aged 17-25 coming from all the capacities of the youth sector and all regions of Kosovo*, as well as students from Greece aged 17-25.</p>
<p>Methodology</p> 	<p>The methodology used at the artistic workshops was based on the principles of intercultural education, using interactive, communicative and nonformal education tools. Working languages were Albanian, Turkish and English.</p> <p>The plan of activities included an academic panel on intercultural dialogue consisting of speakers from Kosovo* and Greece, painting classes, free screenings of movies addressing the topic of intercultural diversity, sightseeing, networking and group building sessions.</p>
<p>Results and impact</p> 	<p>In total, more than 200 people visited the premises and activities of the Intercultural Week, with all the benefits that this means for the city and its young population.</p> <p>The week concluded with the exhibition of the works of art created by young people at the Historic Castle of the city.</p> <p>The project was good one of the good practices selected within the Paris Forum de Paix 2018.</p>

Annex II

The consent form used at the research

Title: A study on the 10 years of Euro-Arab Cooperation
Consent Form for Interviews

Thank you for reading the information sheet about the interview sub-study. If you are happy to participate then please complete and sign the form below. Please initial the boxes below to confirm that you agree with each statement:

I confirm that I have understood the information provided and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without there being any negative consequences. In addition, should I not wish to answer any particular question or questions, I am free to decline.

I agree for the researcher to take notes during the interview. I understand that the notes made of this interview will be used for analysis and that extracts from the interview may be used in any conference presentation, report, journal article or blog on the social media developed as a result of the research.

I agree that my data will be kept for the publication related to this study after the completion of the study.

I agree to take part in this interview.

Name of the participant

Date

Signature

Dr Mary Drosopulos _____

Principal Researcher Date

Signature

To be counter-signed and dated electronically for telephone/skype interviews or in the presence of the participant for face to face interviews

Copies: *Once this has been signed by all parties the participant should receive a copy of the signed and dated participant consent form, and the information sheet. A copy of the signed and dated consent form should be placed in the main project file which must be kept in a secure location.*